

#### **§ 956.17**

extent that the presiding officer deems proper to insure a fair hearing.

(c) Testimony shall be under oath or affirmation, and witnesses shall be subject to cross-examination.

(d) Agreed statements of fact may be received in evidence.

(e) Official notice or knowledge may be taken of the types of matters of which judicial notice or knowledge may be taken.

(f) Each party may present oral argument.

#### **§ 956.17 Discovery—depositions.**

(a) The parties are encouraged to engage in voluntary discovery procedures. In connection with any deposition or other discovery procedure, the presiding officer may make any order which justice requires to protect a party or person from annoyance, embarrassment, oppression, or undue burden or expense; and those orders may include limitations on the scope, method, time and place for discovery, and provisions for protecting the secrecy of confidential information or documents.

(b) After an answer has been filed, the parties may mutually agree to, or the presiding officer may, upon application of either party and for good cause shown, order the taking of the testimony of any person by deposition upon oral examination or written interrogatories before any officer authorized to administer oaths at the place of examination, for use as evidence or for purposes of discovery. The application for order shall specify whether the purpose of the deposition is discovery or for use as evidence.

(c) The time, place, and manner of taking depositions shall be mutually agreed by the parties or, failing such agreement, governed by order of the presiding officer.

(d) No testimony taken by depositions shall be considered as part of the evidence in a hearing unless and until such testimony is offered and received in evidence at such hearing. It will not ordinarily be received in evidence if the deponent is present and can testify personally at the hearing. In such instances, however, the deposition may be used to contradict or impeach the testimony of the witness given at the hearing. In cases submitted on the

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record, the presiding officer may, in his discretion, receive depositions as evidence in supplementation of that record.

(e) Each party shall bear its own expenses associated with the taking of any deposition.

#### **§ 956.18 Interrogatories to parties, admission of facts, and production of documents.**

(a) After an answer has been filed, a party may serve on the other party written interrogatories to be answered separately in writing, signed under oath and returned within 30 days. Upon timely objection by the party, the presiding officer will determine the extent to which the interrogatories will be permitted. The scope and use of interrogatories will be controlled by § 956.17.

(b) After an answer has been filed, a party may serve upon the other party a request for the admission of specified facts. Within 30 days after service, the party served shall answer each requested fact or file objections thereto. The factual propositions set out in the request shall be deemed admitted upon the failure of a party to respond to the request for admission.

(c) Upon motion of any party showing good cause therefore, and upon notice, the presiding officer may order the other party to produce and permit the inspection and copying or photocopying of any designated documents or objects, not privileged, specifically identified, and their relevance and materiality to the cause or causes in issue explained, which are reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence. If the parties cannot themselves agree thereon, the presiding officer shall specify just terms and conditions in making the inspection and making the copies and photographs.

#### **§ 956.19 Transcript.**

Testimony and argument at hearings shall be reported verbatim, unless the presiding officer otherwise orders. Transcripts or copies of the proceedings shall be supplied to the parties at such rates as may be fixed by contract between the reporter and the Postal Service.